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Francis Cherry papers MS.000407

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Summary Information

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Date [inclusive] 1952-1955

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Biographical/Historical Note

Francis Adams Cherry served as the thirty-fifty Governor of Arkansas from 1952-1954. He was born on September 5, 1908, in Fort Worth, Texas, and grew up in El Reno and Enid, Oklahoma. He settled in Arkansas in 1932, where he attended Law School at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, and later moved to Little Rock in 1936, where he went to work in the law office of Leffel Gentry. He married Margaret Frierson on November 10, 1937. They moved to Jonesboro, Arkansas, where he opened a private law practice with Marcus Feitz. Margaret and Francis Cherry had three children.

Cherry was elected Chancellor and Probate Judge of the 12th Chancery District in 1942. He spent two years in the U.S. Navy in the mid-1940s, and returned to be reelected to the same judgeship in 1948.

In 1952, Francis Cherry entered the Governor's race against the incumbent, Sid McMath, in the Democratic primary. Cherry finished behind McMath by 9,000 votes, but he did succeed in forcing a run-off. In the run-off, Cherry defeated McMath by almost 10,000 votes. In the general election, Cherry easily defeated the Republican, Jefferson W. Speck. Cherry only served one term, as he lost in the Democratic primary run-off to Orval Faubus.

Cherry moved to Washington, D.C., in 1955 and was appointed to the Subversive Activities Control Board under President Eisenhower. Cherry died, July 15, 1965, and is buried in Oaklawn Cemetery in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains correspondence, notes, reports, county appointments, chancery appointments, and financial papers of the Governor's Office. The inclusive dates covered are 1952-1954.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Arkansas State Archives 8/12/2014

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Unknown.

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